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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

INRE-00 PM-03 RSC-01 SP-02 L-01 SAM-01 PRS-01 EUR-08

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---------- 018307
O 281135Z OCT 74
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN
TO CNO WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1607
INFO SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK IMMEDIATE
COMIDEASTFOR IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0884

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS : OVIP, BA
SUBJECT : PROPOSED CNO VISIT TO BAHRAIN

REFS : MANAMA 877 (NOTAL); MANAMA 726; MANAMA 710

1. I MET WITH PRIME MINISTER OCTOBER 28 AND DISCUSSED FRANKLY CONSIDERATIONS TO BE WEIGHED (MANAMA 877) IN DETERMINING WHETHER CNO'S VISIT TO BAHRAIN AT THIS TIME WOULD BE DESIRABLE. HAVING OBVIOUSLY GIVEN THESE POINTS CAREFUL THOUGHT PRIME MINISTER EMPHATICALLY CONFIRMED THAT CNO WILL BE MOST WELCOME HERE NOVEMBER 2. HE WENT ON TO EXPOUND ON IMPORTANCE GOB ATTACHES TO VISITS BY HIGH-LEVEL AMERICANS, STRESSING PARTICULARLY SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF HAVING SUCH VISITORS COME TO BAHRAIN WHEN THEY ARE STOPPING IN BOTH IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA.
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2. PRIME MINISTER UNDERSTANDS NOVEMBER 2 VISIT IS FOR PURPOSE OF CALLING ON HIM AND OTHER APPROPRIATE GOB OFFICIALS AND THAT CNO WILL RETURN TO BAHRAIN NOVEMBER 7-8 TO COMPLETE BUSINESS WITH MIDDLE EAST FORCE COMMAND. PRIME MINISTER SAID NORMALLY AMIR WOULD ALSO RECEIVE CNO BUT UNFORTUNATELY WILL BE IN LONDON AT THAT TIME; HENCE PRIME MINISTER AND "SEVERAL OTHER MINISTERS" WILL RECEIVE ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY. (COMMENT: AMIR'S ABSENCE RAISES TRICKY PROTOCOL QUESTION SINCE SHAIKH HAMAD BIN ISA WHO, AS DEFENSE MINISTER, WOULD NORMALLY BE MOST APPROPRIATE MINISTERIAL CONTACT FOR CNO, IS OF COURSE, ALSO CROWN PRINCE AND HENCE "ACTING AMIR" DURING SHAIKH ISA'S ABSENCE FROM THE COUNTRY. TITLES ASIDE, THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT PRIME MINISTER IS, AFTER AMIR, NUMBER TWO MAN IN REGIME. IN TALKING WITH PRIME MINISTER I HINTED AT DESIRABILITY OF CNO'S ALSO CALLING ON SHAIKH HAMAD BUT GOT IMPRESSION THIS IS TO BE PRIME MINISTER'S SHOW AND SHAIKH HAMAD WILL NOT PARTICIPATE). PLEASE SEE PARA. 3A MANAMA 710 FOR BIO NOTES ON PRIME MINISTER.

3. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE PROMISED TO GIVE US FIRM TIME FOR CNO'S CALL IN NEXT FEW DAYS AND WE WILL TRY TO ARRANGE IT IN 1630-1800 TIME FRAME. ANTICIPATE CALL WILL LAST NOT MORE THAN ONE HOUR. MANAMA 726 REPORTS SUBSTANCE SECRETARY MIDDENDORF'S RECENT TALK WITH AMIR AND PRIME MINISTER. ON BASIS OUR EXPERIENCE WITH RECENT HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS, CNO SHOULD BE ALERTED TO FACT THAT, IN ABSENCE OF AMIR, PRIME MINISTER TENDS TOWARD MONOLOGUE IN MEETING WITH SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS AND CNO WILL BE HARD PRESSED TO GET WORD IN EDGEWISE.

4. I THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF FOLLOWING POINTS WERE MADE WITH PRIME MINISTER: A) APPRECIATION FOR GOB'S DECISION, AND PARTICULARLY THE PRIME MINISTER'S KEY ROLE IN IT, TO CONTINUE U.S. NAVAL PRESENCE HERE. (COMMENT: PRIME MINISTER TOLD ME EMPHATICALLY TODAY THIS QUESTION IS "SETTLED"). CONFIDENTIAL

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B) IMPORTANCE USG ATTACHES TO COOPERATION GULF STATES IN MILITARY AS WELL AS OTHER MATTERS, NOTING LONG-STANDING U.S. EFFORT TO BOLSTER DEFENSE CAPABILITIES OF BOTH IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA TO PERMIT THEIR PLAYING EFFECTIVE COOPERATIVE ROLE IN ASSURING SECURITY OF GULF. C) CNO'S ASSESSMENT EXTENT AND SIGNIFICANCE SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND (PRIME MINISTER'S MONOLOGUE PERMITTING) GENERAL

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COMMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL MILITARY BALANCE.

5. I DOUBT PRIME MINISTER WILL HIT UP CNO SPECIFICALLY ON MIDDLE EAST FORCE RENT QUESTION OR ON DESIRED U.S. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, BUT IF SO, BELIEVE A GENERAL RESPONSE ON U.S. DESIRE TO BE FORTHCOMING ON THESE QUESTIONS WILL SUFFICE. ALSO DOUBT THAT PRIME MINISTER WILL ASK POINT BLANK FOR SYMPATHETIC TREATMENT ANY BAHRAINI REQUESTS FOR U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT, BUT I SHOULD FLAG HERE HE RAISED POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING TOW MISSILE WITH ME OCTOBER 28 (SEPTEL) AND HAS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED INTEREST IN U.S. HELP IN DEVELOPING BAHRAIN COAST GUARD.
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